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Household Purchases of Butter, Fluid Whole Milk, and Fluid Skim Milk, May 1956



HPD - 27

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Agricultural Marketing Service
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PREFACE

This series of monthly reports is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

Reports in this series covering the months April 1954 through March 1956 showed estimates of household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. Starting in April 1956 the coverage was changed to include data on fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk products in addition to butter. The reporting on cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine was discontinued at that time.

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data on butter only for the months April 1953-March 1954 are also available. The data prior to April 1954 were based on a sample of about 4,300 families and were statistically adjusted to the level reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, FLUID WHOLE MILK,
AND FLUID SKIM MILK, MAY 1956

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

United States householders bought about 64.2 million pounds of butter during May 1956--up 2 million pounds, or 3 percent, from purchases in May 1955. In both April and May this year, householders reported larger purchases than a year earlier in the face of higher retail prices. The price for butter reported by householders in this survey was over 68 cents per pound in May 1956, about 2 cents higher than in May 1955.

The household market for butter, as indicated by the percentage of families buying, was about the same in May 1956 as a year earlier. Over 45 percent of all families made a butter purchase in both periods. The frequency of purchase per buying family during May 1956 was higher while the average quantity per purchase was the same as a year earlier (table 1).

The April and May 1956 data on household purchases of butter indicate some slowing up in the rate of increase over a year earlier. For these two months, purchases were almost 4 percent above April-May 1955. In the periods April 1955-March 1956 and April 1954-March 1955, butter purchases for household use had been 5 and 13 percent higher, respectively, than in the preceding dairy marketing year.

Household purchases of butter per capita during April-May 1956 were reported about 3 percent above the same period a year ago. In a 28-day period during the first 2 months of the current dairy marketing year, the per capita rate of purchase was close to 0.4 of a pound. This excludes butter consumed on farms where produced, domestic donations under various food distribution programs, and use in restaurants, hotels, and other institutions.

Compared with April 1956, butter purchases during May showed a decline while the average price paid and percentage of all families buying showed slight gains. The price increase for butter in May this year was in contrast to the usual seasonal pattern at that time of the year.

The April 1956 report presented for the first time, in this series, data on household purchases of fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk. The information covered total purchases and prices for the major fluid categories and by container size for each category. In addition, estimates are shown on percent of families buying and per capita purchases.

Comparisons for fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk are made between the current month and for the same month 2 years earlier. The marketing year April 1954-March 1955 was used for comparative purposes because it was the most recent period for which data were available for fluid whole and other fluid milk products.

Fluid whole milk, as carried in this report, includes extra grades, regular grades, homogenized and nonhomogenized, and fortified and unfortified fluid whole milk products. Fluid skim milk includes plain and fortified skim, buttermilk, and flavored milk drinks. Household purchases of each of the components making up these major categories are not available. Fluid cream and half and half mixtures data are not included in this report.

Total purchases of selected dairy products by household consumers only are shown in this report. It does not include consumption or purchases for use in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, schools, or other institutions; furthermore, quantities of these products utilized by industry for various end uses are not included.

Householders reported buying 1,093 million quarts of fluid whole milk in May 1956, about 29 million quarts, or a total increase almost 3 percent above the level of purchase in May 1954.

Purchases of fluid skim products for household use were reported at 67.3 million quarts which was a gain of about 14 million quarts, or a 26 percent increase from purchases in May 1954 (table 2). In May 1956, compared with the preceding month, purchases of fluid whole items were up while fluid skim items were down slightly. The quantity of fluid whole milk bought by households was over 94 percent of the total of fluid whole and skim milk purchases combined during May 1956.

Fluid whole milk: Important shifts from May 1954 to May 1956 were noted when household purchases were analysed by container size. Householders reported an increase of 17 percent in the amount purchased in gallon containers, a jump of almost 59 percent in purchases in half-gallons, but a drop of 13 percent in the amount bought in quart containers.

The distribution of fluid whole milk purchases by size of container in May 1956 was as follows: gallons, 6.6 percent; half-gallons, 30.2 percent; and quarts, 63.1 percent. Household purchases in other size containers (pint, one-third, and half-pint) represented the remainder--a fractional percentage.

The average price reported paid per quart for fluid whole milk, regardless of size of container, by consumers in this survey was 22.3 cents in May 1956 as compared with 21.6 cents in May 1954. This was reflected in higher average prices paid regardless of container size. The price of fluid whole milk sold in the gallon size container showed a larger percentage increase than was

reported for milk sold in other size containers. Average prices reported paid in May 1956 for fluid whole milk by container sizes were: 18.5 cents per quart purchased in gallons, 21.2 cents per quart purchased in half-gallons, and 23.3 cents per quart purchased in single quarts (table 3).

Fluid skim milk: Total purchases of skim products by householders during May 1956 compared with May 1954 were up 26 percent. The most noticeable change was that the amount of fluid skim products sold in half-gallon containers more than doubled. Householders also reported a 10 percent gain in purchases of fluid skim milk in the quart size, while the level of purchases in gallon size containers declined about 4 percent.

During May 1956, household purchases of skim items in quart containers made up 77 percent of total purchases, half-gallons over 19 percent, gallons about 3 percent, and only fractional amounts in other size containers.

Consumers reported paying more for fluid skim products in May 1956 compared with May 1954. This was reflected by price increases of 2 percent in fluid skim products sold in quart size containers, 6 percent in half-gallons, and 13 percent in gallons. The average price paid for fluid skim products in May 1956 was 11.6 cents per quart in gallons; 16.6 cents per quart in half-gallons; and 19.3 cents per quart in quart containers. The average price reported for total purchases of fluid skim milk was 18.6 cents per quart in May 1956 and 18.5 cents in May 1954.

The average price paid per quart for fluid skim items in May 1956 moved up slightly over the preceding month for all size containers. This was not true for the April-May 1954 movement, when prices for fluid skim items sold in gallon and quart sizes showed a slight decline (table 4).

About 83 percent of all families made a purchase of fluid milk, including whole and skim, during the 4-week period of May 1956 compared with slightly less than 81 percent in the same period 2 years earlier. ^{1/} Almost 81 percent of all families bought fluid whole milk during the month of May 1956 while 19 percent bought fluid skim products. This reflects a slight increase from May 1954 in the percentage of families buying fluid milk and fluid skim milk products. The percent of families purchasing fluid whole milk and fluid skim products increased in May 1956 over May 1954 while in April 1956 only fluid skim purchases showed a slight gain over the same month in 1954 (table 5).

Household purchases per capita for fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk combined during May 1956 were reported at 7.15 quarts, a slight increase over the same month of 1954. This increase in the overall per capita rate of consumption for fluid products by household consumers during May 1956 over

^{1/} Slightly over 10 percent of all families reporting in this survey live on farms and many of these families have farm produced milk available for their use.

May 1954 was reflected in the 20.6 percent gain for fluid skim milk products while fluid whole milk per capita purchases were reported about the same.

Household purchases per capita for total fluid milk and fluid whole milk increased during May 1956 over the preceding month but there was a slight decrease in fluid skim milk. This was the same pattern observed between April and May 1954 (table 6).

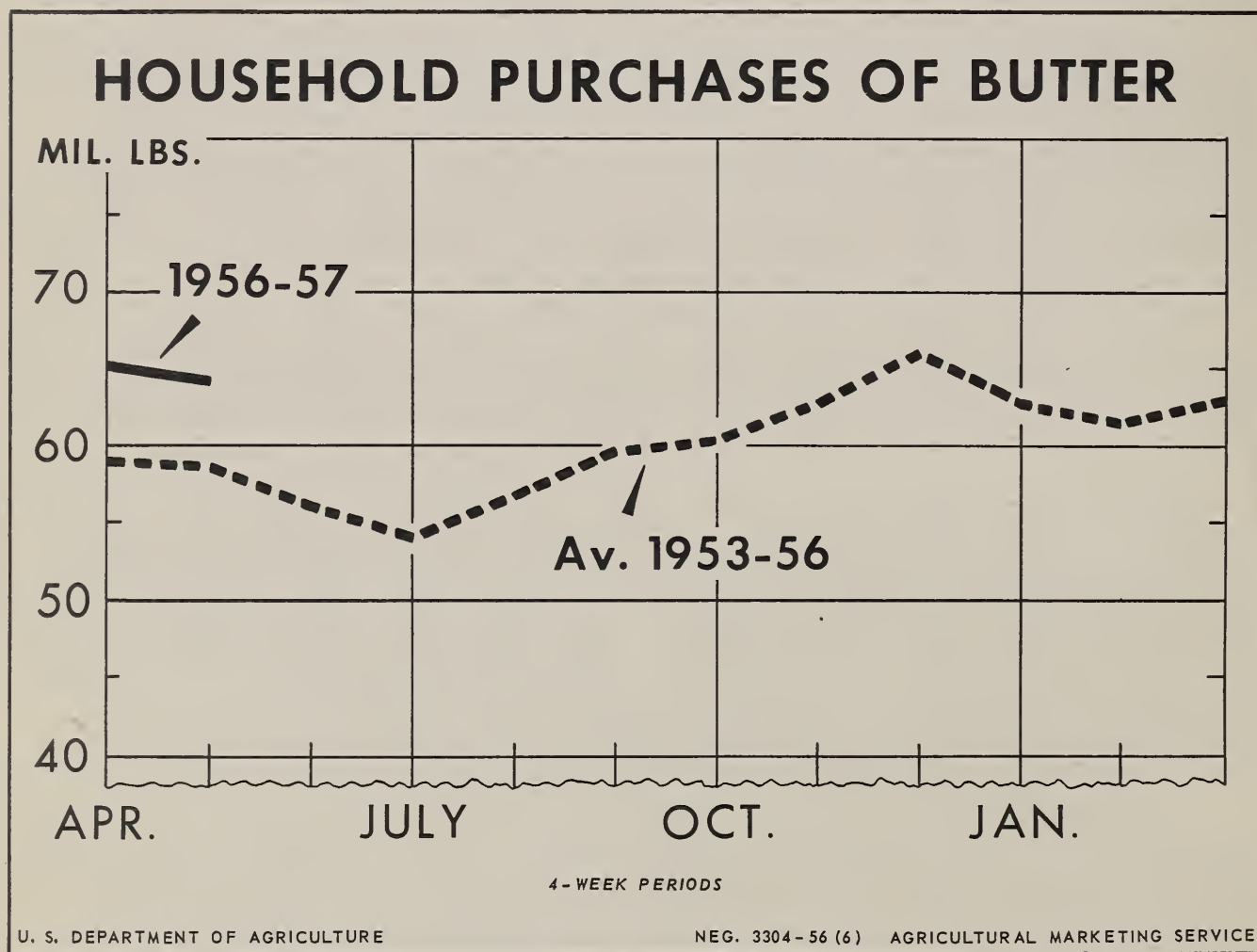


Figure 1

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Total				Per 1,000 population			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
April.....	65.1	62.7	58.0	56.2	401	388	367	369
May.....	64.2	62.2	58.5	54.7	396	385	371	359
June.....		61.3	54.5	51.9		380	345	340
July.....		57.0	54.2	50.9		356	341	332
August.....		58.7	57.9	53.3		366	364	348
September.....		63.1	60.4	55.1		394	379	360
October.....		66.0	63.2	51.0		409	394	331
November.....		68.0	65.7	54.4		422	410	353
December.....		72.4	69.2	55.5		449	432	361
January.....		66.2	65.3	56.6		411	407	367
February.....		67.2	63.8	53.4		417	398	346
March.....		68.3	64.0	56.3		423	399	365
	Percentage of all families buying				Average price paid per pound			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	45.3	45.1	44.0	44.7	67.7	67.2	66.6	75.4
May.....	45.6	45.2	42.8	43.5	68.4	66.7	66.0	75.0
June.....		44.6	41.4	42.7		66.5	65.7	74.5
July.....		44.0	42.2	43.3		66.7	65.8	74.5
August.....		45.1	43.3	44.2		66.7	66.0	74.7
September.....		46.1	43.1	45.9		67.4	66.4	74.9
October.....		46.3	45.4	43.7		67.7	68.1	75.3
November.....		47.6	46.2	44.8		67.6	68.2	76.6
December.....		49.0	48.5	44.4		67.8	68.6	76.0
January.....		46.9	45.5	42.8		68.0	68.2	75.6
February.....		46.5	45.6	42.2		67.8	67.7	75.2
March.....		47.2	45.4	44.1		67.5	67.6	72.2

(Continued)

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods (continued)

Period	Per buying family							
	Purchases				Quantity per purchase			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
April.....	2.66	2.64	2.74	2.71	1.11	1.09	1.09	1.06
May.....	2.63	2.60	2.80	2.75	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.04
June.....		2.60	2.72	2.64		1.09	1.09	1.04
July.....		2.45	2.65	2.58		1.09	1.09	1.04
August.....		2.50	2.81	2.67		1.08	1.08	1.03
September.....		2.58	2.86	2.69		1.09	1.09	1.03
October.....		2.68	2.84	2.59		1.10	1.09	1.02
November.....		2.66	2.88	2.65		1.11	1.09	1.04
December.....		2.70	2.66	2.68		1.13	1.11	1.05
January.....		2.65	2.73	2.90		1.10	1.09	1.04
February.....		2.70	2.65	2.73		1.10	1.10	1.04
March.....		2.68	2.67	2.75		1.11	1.09	1.04

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER

Prices Paid and Percentage of Families Buying

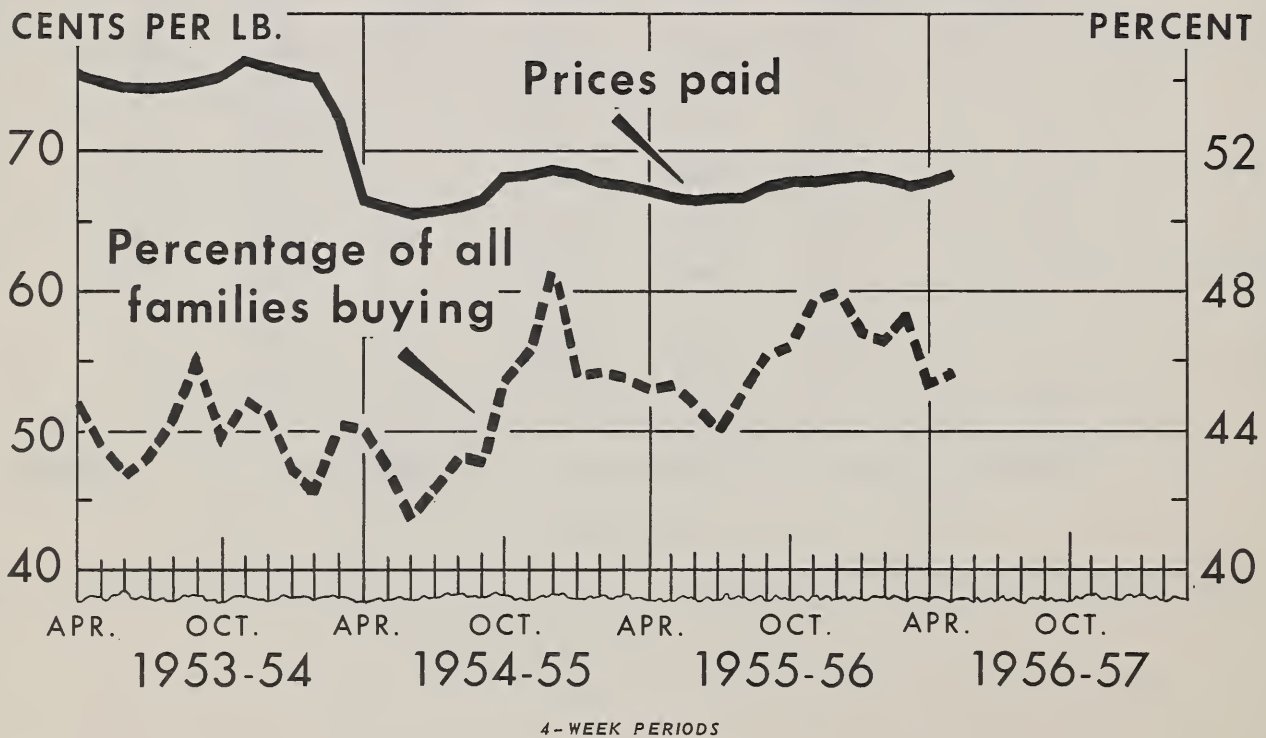


Figure 2

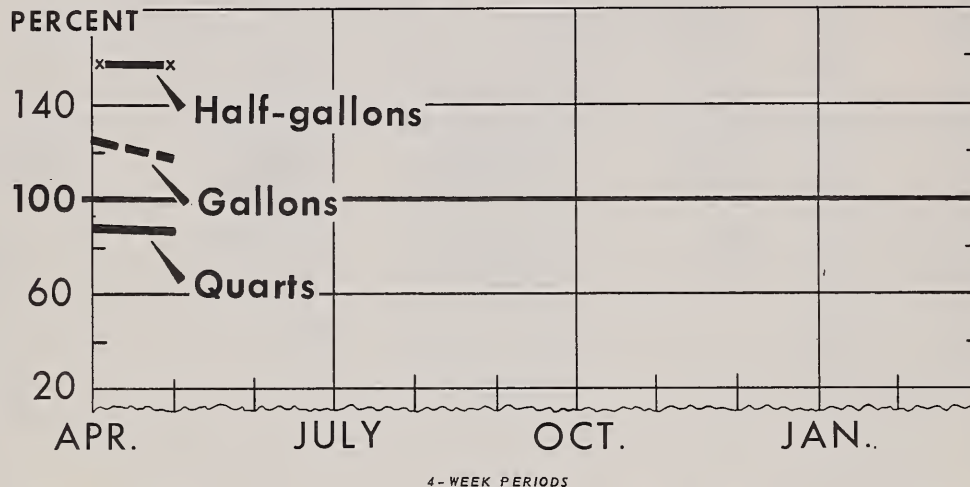
Table 2.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Total household purchases and average price paid per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased			
	Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	1,086	1,046	68.2	54.7
May.....	1,093	1,064	67.3	53.6
June.....		1,034		55.7
July.....		1,003		55.3
August.....		1,021		59.2
September.....		1,082		61.7
October.....		1,112		58.7
November.....		1,117		55.0
December.....		1,119		53.0
January.....		1,125		54.6
February.....		1,121		58.7
March.....		1,116		61.6
	Average price paid per quart equivalent			
	Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	22.2	21.9	18.5	18.8
May.....	22.3	21.6	18.6	18.5
June.....		21.6		18.4
July.....		21.8		18.6
August.....		22.0		18.7
September.....		22.2		19.2
October.....		22.3		19.0
November.....		22.4		18.9
December.....		22.4		18.8
January.....		22.3		18.8
February.....		22.3		18.6
March.....		22.1		18.5

1956-57 as a % of 1954-55

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF FLUID WHOLE MILK

By Size of Container

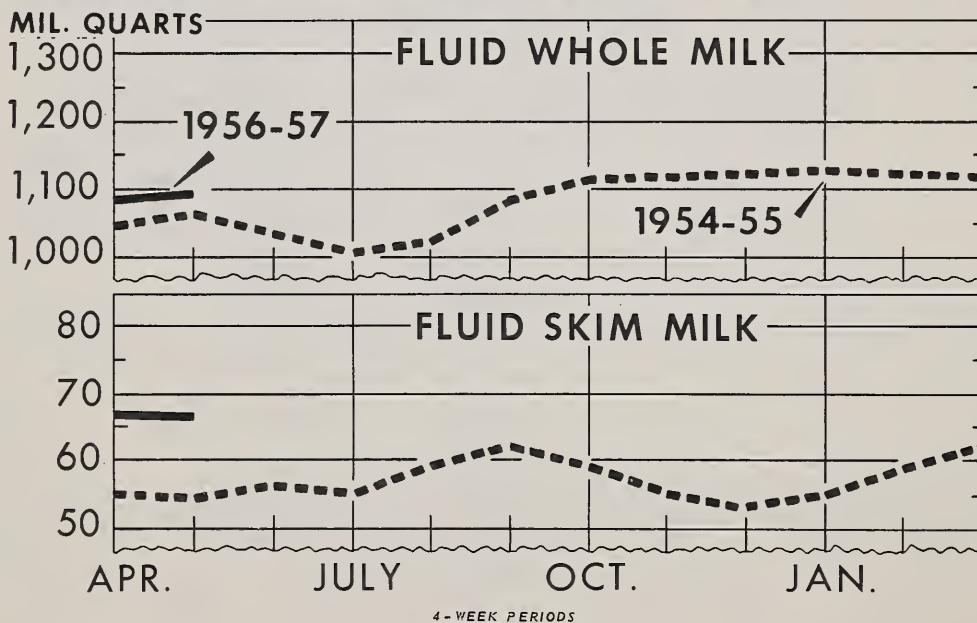


U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 3305-56 (6) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Figure 3

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF FLUID MILK



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NEG. 3303-56 (6) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Figure 4

Table 3.--Fluid whole milk: Household purchases by container size and average price paid, per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	691	787	321	202	72.4	57.3	1.5	0.4
May.....	690	793	330	208	72.4	62.1	0.7	0.5
June.....		772		200		60.7		0.3
July.....		745		204		53.7		0.3
August.....		759		208		54.0		0.6
September.....		801		219		61.3		0.6
October.....		816		230		66.2		0.7
November.....		811		242		62.3		0.9
December.....		805		247		66.3		1.0
January.....		800		254		69.2		0.9
February.....		790		256		74.4		0.9
March.....		783		260		70.9		1.2
Average price paid per quart equivalent								
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	23.2	22.7	20.9	20.4	18.1	17.5	1/	1/
May.....	23.3	22.4	21.2	19.9	18.5	17.0	1/	1/
June.....		22.5		19.5		16.6		1/
July.....		22.7		19.7		16.8		1/
August.....		22.8		20.1		17.2		1/
September.....		23.1		20.4		17.2		1/
October.....		23.2		20.6		17.6		1/
November.....		23.2		20.7		17.8		1/
December.....		23.3		20.5		18.2		1/
January.....		23.2		20.5		17.9		1/
February.....		23.3		20.5		17.9		1/
March.....		23.1		20.3		17.7		1/

1/ Not available.

Table 4.--Fluid skim milk: Household purchases by container size and average price paid, per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	53.4	47.9	11.9	4.0	2.7	2.7	0.2	0.1
May.....	51.9	47.2	13.0	3.8	2.3	2.4	.1	.2
June.....		48.7		5.4		1.5		.1
July.....		48.5		4.4		2.3		.1
August.....		50.6		5.5		3.0		.1
September.....		53.3		5.4		2.8		.2
October.....		51.4		4.8		2.2		.3
November.....		48.9		4.4		1.7		.1
December.....		46.4		4.7		1.7		.2
January.....		46.0		6.5		2.0		.1
February.....		50.2		6.4		1.9		.2
March.....		52.4		7.3		1.7		.2
Average price paid per quart equivalent								
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	19.2	19.4	16.5	15.7	11.3	11.9	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
May.....	19.3	19.0	16.6	15.7	11.6	10.3	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
June.....		18.9		15.7		10.4		<u>1/</u>
July.....		19.3		16.1		9.2		<u>1/</u>
August.....		19.4		16.6		9.5		<u>1/</u>
September.....		20.1		15.4		9.4		<u>1/</u>
October.....		19.5		17.2		12.4		<u>1/</u>
November.....		19.4		15.8		10.7		<u>1/</u>
December.....		19.2		17.1		10.8		<u>1/</u>
January.....		19.3		16.7		12.6		<u>1/</u>
February.....		19.1		16.6		10.5		<u>1/</u>
March.....		19.1		15.9		12.5		<u>1/</u>

1/ Not available.

Table 5.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Percentage of families buying, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Any fluid milk		Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
April.....	81.8	82.6	79.8	81.0	19.4	18.7
May.....	82.8	80.9	80.9	79.5	19.2	18.0
June.....		81.6		80.1		19.4
July.....		81.1		79.8		19.3
August.....		81.9		80.5		19.8
September.....		81.4		80.0		19.2
October.....		82.9		81.4		17.9
November.....		82.7		81.3		18.2
December.....		82.6		81.1		16.7
January.....		81.8		80.2		18.9
February.....		83.2		82.0		18.7
March.....		81.9		80.3		19.6

Table 6.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Household purchases per capita in quart equivalent, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Total		Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts
April.....	7.11	6.97	6.69	6.62	0.42	0.35
May.....	7.15	7.07	6.74	6.74	.41	0.34
June.....		6.90		6.54		0.35
July.....		6.65		6.31		0.35
August.....		6.79		6.42		0.37
September.....		7.19		6.80		0.39
October.....		7.31		6.94		0.37
November.....		7.31		6.97		0.34
December.....		7.31		6.98		0.33
January.....		7.35		7.01		0.34
February.....		7.36		6.99		0.37
March.....		7.34		6.96		0.38

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